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Application No.: 10/560702

Case No.: 58688US004

Amendments to the Claims:

The following Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1 – 13. (Canceled)

14. (withdrawn) A composition for colouring a ceramic framework, the composition comprising:

- a) a solvent;
- b) a metal salt or metal complex, soluble in the solvent, wherein the amount of the metal ions in the composition is in the range of 0.01 to 7.0% by weight; and
- c) polyethylene glycol having a Mn in the range of 10,000 to 50,000 in an amount of 1 to 8% by weight of the total composition;

wherein the metal salt is selected from rare earth elements and/or the subgroups of the rare earth elements and/or salts of transition metals of the groups IIIA, IVA, VA, VIA, VIIA, VIIIA, IB, IIB.

15. (withdrawn) The composition of claim 14 further comprising a stabilizer.

16. (withdrawn) The composition of claim 14, wherein the solution has a viscosity comparable to an aqueous polyethylene glycol solution that is 6% by weight of polyethylene glycol 35,000 (Mn = 14,000 to 19,000) at 23°C.

17. (withdrawn) The composition of claim 14, wherein the solvent further comprises water, methyl alcohol, ethyl alcohol, iso-propyl alcohol, n-propyl alcohol, acetone, glycol, or glycerol or mixtures thereof.

18. (withdrawn) The composition of claim 14, wherein the anion of the metal salt or metal complex is selected from Cl⁻, Br⁻, I⁻, SO₄²⁻, SO₃²⁻, NO₂⁻, or NO₃⁻.

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19. (withdrawn) The composition of claim 14, wherein the metal salt or metal complex contains elements selected from La, Pr, Er, Fe, Co, Ni, Cu or Mn.
20. (withdrawn) The composition of claim 14, further comprising an additive selected from the group consisting of stabilizers, complex builders, beating additives buffers or thixotropic substances.
21. (withdrawn) A process for obtaining a coloured ceramic framework, the process comprising the steps
- a) providing a ceramic framework;
 - b) providing the composition of claim 14;
 - c) treating the ceramic framework with the composition of b); and
 - d) firing the treated ceramic framework.
22. (withdrawn) The process of claim 21, further comprising the step of drying the treated ceramic framework after it has been treated with the composition.
23. (withdrawn) The process according to claim 21, wherein the ceramic framework is treated with the composition for about 1 to 5 minutes at room temperature.
24. (withdrawn) The process according to claim 21, wherein the firing takes place for a ZrO_2 based ceramic at a temperature above 1300°C and lasts for at least 0.5 h and for a Al_2O_3 based ceramic at a temperature above 1350°C and lasts for at least 0.5 h.
25. (withdrawn) The process according to claim 21, wherein the firing takes place at a temperature above about 1300°C .
26. (withdrawn) The process according to claim 21, wherein colouring the ceramic framework is treated with the composition by dipping the framework into the composition by spraying, brushing or by using a sponge or fabric to apply the composition.
27. (Currently amended) A ceramic framework, treated with ~~the~~ a composition of claim 14 comprising:

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a) a solvent;

b) a metal salt or metal complex, soluble in the solvent, wherein the amount of the metal ions in the composition is in the range of 0.01 to 7.0% by weight; and

c) polyethylene glycol having a Mn in the range of 10,000 to 50,000 in an amount of 1 to 8% by weight of the total composition;

wherein the metal salt is selected from rare earth elements and/or the subgroups of the rare earth elements and/or salts of transition metals of the groups IIIA, IVA, VA, VIA, VIIA, VIIIA, IB, IIB.

28. (previously presented) The ceramic framework according to claim 27, wherein the ceramic is presintered and adsorbent.

29. (currently amended) A ceramic framework, ~~obtainable from~~ made by the process of claim 21 comprising the steps of:

a) providing a ceramic framework;

b) providing the composition comprising:

i) a solvent;

ii) a metal salt or metal complex, soluble in the solvent, wherein the amount of the metal ions in the composition is in the range of 0.01 to 7.0% by weight; and

iii) polyethylene glycol having a Mn in the range of 10,000 to 50,000 in an amount of 1 to 8% by weight of the total composition;

wherein the metal salt is selected from rare earth elements and/or the subgroups of the rare earth elements and/or salts of transition metals of the groups IIIA, IVA, VA, VIA, VIIA, VIIIA, IB, IIB;

c) treating the ceramic framework with the composition of step b); and

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d) firing the treated ceramic framework.

30. (previously presented) A ceramic framework according to claim 27 comprising ZrO_2 or Al_2O_3 .

31. (withdrawn) A method for colouring a ceramic framework, the method comprising the step of treating the ceramic framework with the composition of claim 14.

32. (withdrawn) A method of reducing the sintering deformation of ceramic framework during firing, the method comprising the step of treating the framework with the composition of claim 14.

33. (withdrawn) The method of claim 31, wherein the ceramic framework is selected from presintered bodies comprising ZrO_2 and/or Al_2O_3 .

34. (withdrawn) The method of claim 32, wherein the ceramic framework is selected from presintered bodies comprising ZrO_2 and/or Al_2O_3 .